



DIGITAL SUBSCRIBER LINE (DSL) BASED HOME GATEWAY

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

5 1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) based Home Gateway products.

2. Description of Related Art

10 With the advent of the communication technologies and breakthroughs in Digital Signal Processing (DSP), DSL, and Wireless, more bandwidths are now available for home communications than were once provided by traditional voice-grade analog modems. Because of this, there is widespread interest among home users in faster access to content provided by service providers via high-speed
15 facilities such as DSL, cable, and wireless. This interest appears to be driving the evolution of the home communications from narrow band applications to broadband applications.

Before DSL, broadband access via shared Local Area Network (LAN), Frame Relay or Asynchronous Transmission Mode (ATM) has only been used by
20 commercial or business applications, while most to-home communications are narrow band and use either Integrated Service Digital Network (ISDN) line or analog modems. Besides the difference in bandwidth, another key difference between narrow band and broadband communications is operational complexity -- the service provisioning process is required by the broadband applications.
25 Normally, a trained professional is required in the office environment to manage such complexity. It is undesirable and costly, however, to have trained networking personnel managing a home network.

Figs. 1 and 2 depict known home gateway devices for high-speed communications. Fig. 1 depicts a personal computer interface (PCI) based ASDL
30 home gateway, while Fig. 2 depicts a stand-alone ASDL home gateway. These gateway devices are similar to those that are commonly used in offices. In other words, the function and the design of today's home networking device, i.e., home gateway, is directly related to the one used in the office environment today. Thus,

the known devices are complex, and difficult to use. In addition, home users are required to install Ethernet cables to connect PCs to form a LAN in order to share resources. Home users are also required to install software provided by the vendor for configurations, and to recognize the difference and the type of interfaces. Finally, information accesses, and in particular, the Internet, is only available through a PC, which is connected to the gateway.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Therefore, a need has arisen for a home gateway that overcomes these and other disadvantages of the related art.

One embodiment of the present invention integrates a DSL modem, an analog modem, a wireless interface, and a home phone network interface into a screen-phone for the broadband communication service to home users. Multiple users are able to access the Internet and the content services for conducting e-commerce, receiving content news, entertaining on-demand, making audio or video communications, and telecommuting or working at home. This screen-phone based DSL home gateway allows in-home communications for the purpose of resource sharing among home computing devices via the existing but not limited to phone wire, wireless or cable.

The complexity of the broadband equipment, such as DSL home gateway, used in the home environment is minimized, without sacrificing the communication capability. In particular, embodiments of the present invention:

- Hide the Internet Routing Protocol based LAN concept from the typical home users.
- No Internet Protocol (IP) router or bridge device should be visible to the home users
- Provide automatic service provisioning and configurations
- May provide the Plug-and-Play connection to home based electronics devices, which include, but not limited to, a WEB pad, a cellular phone, lap-top or notebook computer, desk-top PC, personal data access (PDA) device, smart appliances, TV, alarm system, etc.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a schematic of a PCI-based ADSL Home Gateway.

Fig. 2 is a schematic of a stand-alone ADSL Home Gateway.

Fig. 3 is a schematic of a phone-based and Integrated Home Gateway.

5 **Fig. 4** is a schematic of a phone-based Wireless only Home Gateway.

Fig. 5 is a schematic of phone-based Home Gateway Components.

Fig. 6 is a diagram of a broadband communication access device architecture according to one embodiment of the present invention.

10 **Fig. 7** is a state diagram of a high level software architecture according to one embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 8 is a state diagram of a session manager according to one embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 9 is a state diagram of a service manager according to one embodiment of the present invention.

15 **Fig. 10** is a state diagram of an interface manager according to one embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 11 is a state diagram of a display manager according to one embodiment of the present invention.

20 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Embodiments of the present invention and their technical advantages may be better understood by referring to **Figs. 3** through **11**, like numerals referring to like and corresponding parts of the various drawings.

Referring to **Fig. 3-5**, a home gateway product according to one embodiment
25 of the present invention is provided. In order to hide the complexity of the device from the ordinary home user, no configuration and no IP router, or bridge devices, are visible to home users. To accomplish this, the traditional stand-alone IP specific router or bridge device is removed from the home environment. All the home gateway functions are integrated into an existing home-friendly device. In one
30 embodiment, this may be a telephone set with a display screen (screen phone).

A removable display unit for displaying and accessing both Internet and voice messages may be provided. Home users may subscribe the specific

information from the Internet content provider and display them on the screen through an always-on Internet access. For example, home users may, but not limited to, subscribe the following for the display: the real-time stock quote, weather, headline news, community news, yellow pages through the service providers. This
5 removable display unit is also a personal portable device and can be operated outside of the house via the wireless communications.

In one embodiment, the removable display may be a connected organizer with a display, such as the Palm connected organizers, manufactured by 3Com. In another embodiment, a CRT may be used to display the data.

10 In another embodiment, the display may comprise a touch-sensitive screen for entering data or information. Other suitable input devices may be used.

In one embodiment, home electronic devices, such as a WEB pad, a cellular phone, a lap top or notebook computer, a desk top personal computer, a PDA, smart appliances, alarm systems, home video monitoring equipment, etc. may interface
15 with the device through modular host interfaces. These may use the plug and play configuration.

The modem unit may include both DSL and analog modems. A DSL modem (DSL Remote Terminating Unit), may include one of the following: ADSL, SDSL, HDSL and VDSL, and may be integrated inside a phone set (Gateway),
20 which provides an always-on Internet connectivity. An analog modem, such as V.90 56Kbps using POTS channel, may be also integrated inside the phone set (Gateway) for the purpose of providing the channel redundancy, the broadband service provisioning and configuration.

Referring to Fig. 4, this figure shows a flexibility of this invention to operate
25 on the wireless interface and to connect home devices through a plugging Radio interface. Similar operation applied to other interfaces such as home phone line, cable, and satellite. This invention allows multiple interfaces coexisted in the home gateway.

According to one embodiment of the present invention, modular Plug-and-
30 Play and turn-key interfaces may be included for connecting home devices via the existing phone line, power line, wireless or cable. One or more interfaces may coexist at the same time based on the need of a particular home environment. The

home devices include, but not limited to, desk-top PC, lap-top notebook, home security device, cellular phone, personal data access device, smart IP-based home appliance, printer, facsimile machine, scanner, etc.

In another embodiment, an embedded video camera for video communications may be provided. An embedded video camera may provide the capability for video conferencing, either one-to-one or one-to-many persons, medical diagnostics, security monitor, etc. These applications are available to home users whenever the services are available through the Internet connection. In addition, a user may remotely monitor a single or multiple areas through the Internet.

Referring to Figs. 6-11, a broadband communication access device according to one embodiment of the present invention is disclosed. The broadband communication access device provides both in home and home to home communications. Characteristics of the broadband communication access device may include Plug-N-Play ("PnP") capability that hides the IP [please define] and broadband configuration from the ordinary user. In addition, it may be modular in design.

The broadband communication access device may have the following features:

- PnP made easy
- USB based HPNA module to provide up to 10 Mbps for in-home communications
- Always connected Internet service for multiple users to access both voice and data simultaneously
- Provide both wired and wireless for in- and to- home communications
- Smart IP-home ready [Again, please define "IP"]
- PnP wireless module for IEEE 802.11 or bluetooth technology
- Build in a thin WAP proxy server for WAP-enabled devices to communicate Internet services via push and pull technology
- Automatic broadband service provisioning.

[Any additional description of figs 6-11 available?]

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While the invention has been described in connection with preferred embodiments and examples, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that other variations and modifications of the preferred embodiments described above may be made without departing from the scope of the invention. Other
5 embodiments will be apparent to those skilled in the art from a consideration of the specification or practice of the invention disclosed herein. It is intended that the specification is considered as exemplary only, with the true scope and spirit of the invention being indicated by the following claims.